

Revised CalWORKs Plan  
For SUCCESS In  
San Mateo County

August 2000

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*August 2000*

# Revised CalWORKs Plan for SUCCESS in San Mateo County

## Revised Plan

The Shared Undertaking for Self-Sufficiency (SUCCESS) service delivery model was approved for implementation by CDSS on July 22, 1997. At that time the State approved a package of waivers for San Mateo County that allowed it to implement the SUCCESS program elements developed by the community wide planning process.

The SUCCESS model and the waiver package were approved after the enactment of the PROWRA federal welfare reform act. However, the State's approval took place prior to the implementation of PROWRA as CalWORKs in California under AB1542.

In response to AB1542, the County developed a CalWORKs plan, which was approved by the Board of Supervisors January 27, 1998 as an addendum to the SUCCESS plan.

In August 1999, the Superior Court for the State of California issued an order invalidating the waivers enacted prior to AB1542, which went beyond the requirements of AB1542. This *Revised CalWORKs Plan for San Mateo County* is in response to the Preliminary Injunction. Most of the SUCCESS service delivery model remains intact. However, there were 11 specific areas in the original CalWORKs Plan that required modification. These modifications have been incorporated into the Revised Plan. In addition, this Revised Plan provides updated information in a number of areas where the County has since developed plans. Major enhancements include community service activities, federal Department of Labor Welfare to Work, substance abuse treatment, and job creation planning.

The following areas required modification because they were inconsistent with AB1542:

1. Requiring participation in SUCCESS before aid is granted;
2. Full family sanctions;
3. Consequences related to child support;
4. Immediate assistance;
5. Self-Initiated Program (SIP) participants;
6. Good cause due to remoteness;
7. Requiring 40 hours per week in welfare-to-work activities;
8. Denials for exemption or good cause;
9. Third party assessments to resolve disputes;
10. The allowable 20-day period; and
11. Notices required for sanctions.

## Executive Summary

The SUCCESS Model is designed to:

- Provide a framework for the implementation of federal and State welfare reform legislation in San Mateo County;
- Redesign the existing service delivery processes and reorganize the Human Services Agency workforce to ensure improved customer service;
- Link contracted community-based organizations and the Human Services Agency into one complimentary, non-duplicative network of services to families and children;
- Retrain staff to perform new roles and functions; and
- Develop an automated database and network linkage to enable sharing of information, minimize duplication, and improve multi-service delivery.

The SUCCESS system provides intensive services for families and individuals with severe barriers to attaining self-sufficiency. Changes in the delivery system include the following:

- **Single point of entry:** Families and individuals accessing the system only have to tell their story and give personal and demographic information once. An automated system will allow this information to be shared by appropriate staff from other programs that may be available to assist the family in attaining their plan objectives.
- **Screening and Assessment:** Families and individuals in need receive an Appraisal to identify personal abilities and relevant experiences as well as to identify other family and community members who could be of assistance in helping the family to move quickly to self-sufficiency.
- **Work First:** Non exempt CalWORKs and General Assistance (GA) adults are encouraged to immediately enter a Work First component which is designed to move them into employment as quickly as possible. Work First is not required prior to approval of cash aid, nor is it required to receive emergency assistance.
- **Family Self-Sufficiency Team (FSST):** Families and individuals with either acute or long-standing barriers to self-sufficiency are served by the FSST, which provides case management and specialty services through an assigned Primary Case Manager.

### Plan Types

The County refers to the CDSS WTW 1 & 2 as our Work First Plan. The Activity Change Agreement(s) are add ons to the Work First Plan.

Family Service Plan B Clients not subject to Work First requirements may have a Family Service Plan which contains recommendations regarding services we can offer them on a voluntary basis.

The Preliminary Action Plan is used to identify referral dates and times for emergency referrals at Intake, and to set appointments with the Family Support Division, Child Care Technician, Work First Orientation, etc.

The SUCCESS model presents an opportunity for the San Mateo County community to invest in its future by putting into operation a coordinated system for delivering human services.

Performance objectives include reduced caseload, increased percentage of families participating in work-related activities, and an increased hourly wage.

A number of long term benefits are also expected:

- \_ Improved government response to family needs and better customer service;
- \_ Reduction in the number of children and families living in poverty;
- \_ Reduction in alcohol and drug involvement due to more gainful activity;
- \_ Reduction in the need for expensive criminal justice and jail services; and
- \_ Improved Mental Health for children and families in need.

## Overview

The SUCCESS program was implemented in phases countywide between August 1997 and March 1998. There are SUCCESS sites at regional offices throughout the County. Community based organizations also serve as entry points for SUCCESS.

The SUCCESS program was developed over a period of five years and represents ongoing local welfare reform efforts. It is based on the Work First models and the earlier SUCCESS program centers that have been in existence since 1995. Early components of the program included the development of a Work First model for mandatory GAIN recipients. Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funding helped support the opening of additional Work First centers. The countywide SUCCESS program incorporates successful elements of these earlier programs, providing intensive case management for those who have work-related barriers or other needs, and serving a broader population.

The SUCCESS model implements systemic change through the use of a universal, simplified intake system at multiple entry points coupled with comprehensive case management to help families achieve self-sufficiency. Universal screening and assessment, and comprehensive, multi-disciplinary case management provides for an effective and efficient use of resources. Intensive, short-term, full-time job search assistance, case management, and supportive services focusing on personal responsibility are provided to CalWORKs recipients and eligible applicants, (with incomes less than 130% of poverty level those at risk of CalWORKs (incomes

between 130% and 200% of poverty level) or who are ineligible (incomes over 200% of poverty level), non-custodial parents, and GA applicants and recipients. Costs are charged as allowed to various programs for the different populations. Funding sources include CalWORKs, JTPA/WIA, Welfare to Work, Medi-Cal or County General Fund and other services.

The multi-disciplinary Family Self-Sufficiency Teams (FSST) are a key element of the SUCCESS model. FSST assists families and individuals with either acute or long-standing barriers to self-sufficiency. Participants with issues including domestic violence, substance abuse, or Mental Health will be referred on a voluntary basis to FSST for evaluation, case management and treatment, and necessary support services. For exempt persons, this participation is voluntary. FSST membership includes specialists in eligibility, employment, Mental Health, drug and alcohol and child care. FSST assigns a Primary Case Manager and facilitates access to the appropriate services and treatments.

The SUCCESS Project also incorporates a variety of initiatives to further strengthen the program. Collaborations with the private sector, innovative projects in the area of housing, and the Family Loan Fund administered by a community based organization are among the programs that help foster self-sufficiency for SUCCESS clients. Comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers throughout the county, with a rich array of training and employment services on-site, provide comprehensive workforce development for SUCCESS clients in the transition to self-sufficiency.

## **A. Collaborations for Training and Supportive Services**

The Appraisal component begins at Screening where employment skills, history, support service needs and other relevant family information is gathered. Most of the information noted in 42-711.52 is conveyed at Screening. Some additional items are conveyed via the Work First Handbook which is given to the client at the Orientation. A 5-day intensive Work First STEPS class, and our Network Center activities equate to the AJob Search® component in CalWORKs. Work First classes are open entry/open exit and cover job search, interviewing and networking, communication, time management, decision making, and other job related skills. The Network Center provides the opportunity to put these skills into practice and to actively pursue employment.

Employment Development Department (EDD) staff are on-site to provide job search, CalJobs registration, and job placement assistance. JTPA staff are also on-site to co-enroll SUCCESS participants who are eligible for JTPA services. Community College representatives are on-site and may provide specialized courses. Child care, transportation and ancillary assistance are also provided to SUCCESS participants.

Most participants attend about three weeks of Network Center before an Assessment is conducted to explore additional steps to attain self-sufficiency. The Assessment

(also known as a Post Job Search Evaluation) may be conducted by the Primary Case Manager in conjunction with the Employment Services Specialist who has been working with the participant, or by an out-posted Vocational Counselor.

If identified as needed by the assessment, training may be provided in basic skills, adult education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and vocational and occupational areas that lead to employment in a demand occupation. The full array of needed CalWORKs supportive services are provided to CalWORKs participants.

The SUCCESS Centers will also serve as One-Stop Career Centers consistent with the Workforce Investment Act. While many of the required services are already in place, the One-Stop Centers will offer comprehensive workforce development services including those offered by the Department of Rehabilitation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), veterans organizations, Area Agency on Aging, and others. The centers will offer seamless access to these programs in a service enriched environment which includes Internet access, computers, printers, fax, phones, and an extensive array of printed and taped career and employment information. Work First services have also been expanded to

Medi-Cal clients at the regional offices and One-Stops. Funding for non-CalWORKs clients is differentiated by means of Line Staff time study entries. Hours have been extended to 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the regional offices and One-Stop Career Centers. Child care is provided on site during extended hours to make services more accessible.

The public and private agencies that provide education and training services include:

**Public agencies:**

- \_ Community colleges B Canada College, Skyline College, College of San Mateo, Foothill College, DeAnza College
  
- \_ Universities B University of California, Santa Cruz and University of California, Berkeley Extension
  
- \_ Adult education schools B Cabrillo Unified Adult School, Jefferson Unified High School District, San Mateo Unified High School District, Sequoia Unified High School District, South San Francisco Unified Adult School
  
- \_ Regional Occupational Program (ROP)



### Private agencies:

- ACRT Institute of Arboriculture and Urban Forestry
- American Express Travel School
- American Truck School
- Anthony Schools
- Area Truck Driving School
- Body Therapy Center
- Bryman College
- California College of Communications
- Center for Electronic Art
- Center for Professional Investigative Training
- Community Career Education Center
- Computer Learning Center, Inc.
- Computer Training Academy
- Computer Training College
- Echols International Travel Training
- Goodwill Career Services
- Heavy Equipment Operators School, Inc.
- Institute for Business & Technology
- Management College of San Francisco
- New Horizons Computer Learning of SF Bay Area
- National Training Institute Inc., Santa Clara
- Opportunities Industrialization Center West (OICW)
- Providence Vocational School
- Safety First Commercial Driver Training
- San Jose City Evergreen College
- School of Communication Electronics
- Sierra Academy of Aeronautics Technology
- Silicon Valley College
- Software Advanced Technologies Institute
- Trinity College - San Francisco
- Veterans Workshop/Next Step Center
- West Coast Training, Inc.
- World School of Massage & Advanced Healing Ai
- Worldwide Educational Services
- Youth Employment Program (YEP)
- ZEPHYR-TEC Corporation

### Ongoing collaborations

1. The Employment and Training Administration of HSA which administers JTPA has a formal agreement with **EDD** to coordinate labor market information, recruitment and referral, employer outreach and marketing including job fairs, and specialized services for veterans and youth.
2. The JTPA program also provides intensive **outreach** efforts including specialized marketing (e.g., posters, fliers, job fairs and media announcements) for hard to serve populations including homeless adults, residents of high poverty census tracts, offenders and at-risk youth.

3. The HSA Housing Division has a program to provide short-term shallow rent subsidies to CalWORKs clients transitioning to self-sufficiency. Developed by the SUCCESS Project Housing Design Team, the Human Investment Project Housing Opportunity Program (**HIPHOP**) provides rent subsidies for one year (50% for the first 6 months, declining to 25% for the last 6 months) for CalWORKs clients with recent jobs or who are completing their education. The CalWORKs portion of the funding for this initiative is limited to CalWORKs eligible participants only.
4. A **Family Loan Program** provides short-term, low-interest loans to help low-income families to keep their jobs or continue their education. Funded by \$450,000 in private sources and administered by a community-based organization, this program provides assistance with car repair, rent, child care and other necessary costs. The Family Service Agency of San Mateo County, in partnership with the Peninsula Community Foundation, the Packard Foundation, and HSA, is the first demonstration site in California. Because of its success, eligibility for the Family Loan Program is being expanded, and the loan approval process streamlined.
5. EDD collaborated with HSA, San Mateo County Community College District, Regional Occupational program (ROP), and San Mateo Adult Schools to develop a **training matrix** indicating the services provided by and populations served by each of the education and training providers. The matrix is incorporated in the CalWORKs handbook.
6. In collaboration with HSA, the community colleges developed courses to retrain staff in order to deliver services under the SUCCESS model. These courses have been incorporated into the regular curriculum in new **Human Services Certificate and Degree programs**.
7. The HSA Housing Authority is one of 24 nationwide that has been selected to participate in the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) **Moving to Work Demonstration Program**. Under this program, CalWORKs clients newly receiving Section 8 rent assistance will be limited to 6 years of rent assistance. Coupled with family self-sufficiency services and resources, this program is expected to foster self-sufficiency for these families.
8. The **One-Stop Career Centers** are a collaboration between HSA and the Employment Development Department (EDD), local education, the Department of Rehabilitation, veteran's organizations, Area Agency on Aging, community-based organization, and others including Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to provide comprehensive workforce development services.
9. **Outreach in the schools** includes employment and eligibility staff out-stationed in Coastside, Redwood City, and San Mateo Healthy Start sites and the FUTURES program in Daly City to provide employment and eligibility services.

10. HSA is working with the community colleges to provide training for the working poor and to encourage additional outreach to employers. The Community Business Connection and its **Employer Resources Collaborative** is a joint venture between HSA and area employers and educators. The Resources Collaborative identifies employer needs and works with educational providers to address these needs and to support retention and progression of employees.
11. With grant funding from the State and from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the **Health Care for All Coalition** provides outreach to potential Medi-Cal eligible families and to children who may be eligible for the Healthy Families insurance program. Medi-Cal workers are also outstationed at clinics.

### **Refugee Employment Services Plan**

San Mateo County is not a refugee-impacted county and therefore does not have a Refugee Employment Services Plan.

## **B. Partnerships with Private Sector to Identify Jobs**

The County has long-standing partnerships with the private sector. The membership of both the SUCCESS Advisory Group and the Private Industry Council (PIC) includes employers and labor. The County works closely with the San Mateo County Economic Development Agency (SAMCEDA) which represents employers and employer associations. The PIC has membership from large employers such as PG&E, Sun Microsystems, Long's Drugs, and United Airlines. The Central Labor Council is also represented on the PIC.

The Work First model helps job seekers to identify hidden jobs as well as those, which are publicly posted. One method to accomplish this is through the Work First workshop classes, which include employer panels. Approximately 30 employers (primarily medium size businesses) rotate through these workshops and are able to identify potential job candidates during the panels. These employer panels also present the job seekers with valuable networking opportunities.

San Mateo County has met with the Peninsula Interfaith Action group to discuss how to provide child care and emergency assistance to CalWORKs recipients. Representatives of the faith community have actively participated in the SUCCESS Advisory Committee. HSA is also a member of the Interfaith Health Ministries Advisory Council, whose goal is to support wellness in the community by working collaboratively with members of the faith community and human services providers.

The County is also the recipient of a Job Creation Investment fund grant from the California Trade and Commerce Agency. The project includes extensive contact with

the private sector, coordinated by the SAMCEDA through a Jobs Action Team of local employers to identify employer skill needs and occupational opportunities which match the characteristics of CalWORKs recipients and to identify career ladder opportunities for these individuals.

## **C. Local Labor Market Needs**

The most comprehensive analysis of local labor market needs is represented by the annual Occupational Outlook Report. This report is the official local report of the California Cooperative Occupational Information System (CCOIS) which operates Statewide to provide occupational information on jobs at the local level. It is locally implemented under contract with the State by the San Mateo County PIC, which is a part of the County Employment and Training Administration (ETA).

The labor market information analysis has several components: EDD provides occupational forecast suggestions; an advisory group selects the occupations to be studied; questionnaires are developed for each occupation; a representative sample list of employers is generated; and selected employers are surveyed.

The Occupational Outlook Report and its companion Training Directory are compiled by ETA and distributed to employers, local government agencies, career counselors, educational and training providers, and other stakeholders. Human resources professionals, educators and counselors, and businesses throughout the County use the information. Future plans include making the labor market and occupational information available on the Internet and updating this information quarterly.

In addition, ETA maintains a close working relationship with the local EDD Labor Market Information (LMI) representative through EDD's LMI line of credit program. The County receives numerous reports throughout the year related to occupational demand, industrial growth, employer lists, unemployment and population statistics, and customized research and reports meeting information needs.

## D. Welfare to Work Activities

The County offers the following Welfare to Work Activities:

- Unsubsidized employment
- Subsidized public sector employment
- Work experience
- On-the-job training
- Vocational education and training
- Education directly related to employment
- Adult basic education (includes basic education, GED, and ESL)
- Work-study
- Self-employment
- Community service
- Job search and job readiness assistance
- Job skills training directly related to employment
- Supported work
- Transitional employment
- Mental Health Treatment
- Substance Abuse Treatment
- Domestic Abuse Services

Most of the listed Welfare to Work Activities can be provided to SUCCESS clients as appropriate based on the client's individual Work First Plan which equates to the CalWORKs Welfare to Work Plan. Focused vocational rehabilitation counseling, specialized job development, and on-site job coaching are available for long-term welfare recipients with multiple barriers to employment.

HSA also employs a psychologist to conduct broad spectrum clinical assessments at Vocational Rehabilitation Services. This is an opportunity for clients to be interviewed for barriers that are harder to detect and thus require a higher level of professional assessment, i.e., learning disabilities, psychological and emotional disorders. Psychological and intelligence testing are conducted on an individual basis, and clients are referred to County Mental Health, State Department of Rehabilitation, and other appropriate resources based on the results of the clinical interview and testing. In addition, the psychologist can assist Welfare to Work clients to document disabilities as a part of the SSI application process.

After assessment, an individual who is required to participate in welfare-to-work activities shall enter into a written Work First Plan that will include prescribed activities and services, including necessary supportive services, based on his/her need that will move the individual into employment and toward self-sufficiency. On-the-Job Training funding is available for JTPA participants; educational options are available to

participants who have been unable to find work and whose Work First Plan designates education or training as an activity.

Coordination with DOL WtW Plan:

San Mateo does not have any 15% or 25% WtW Grant projects. The Human Services Agency, as the grant recipient and administrative entity for JTPA/WIA programs, receives and administers WtW funds. The HSA operates WtW funded activities in-house through the comprehensive service-s provisions of WtW and contracts for services with a community organization, OICW. In-house coordination is achieved through monthly standing meetings and special meetings of WtW and CalWORKs Staff and through a fully integrated program design.

We subcontract with OICW in the Southern Region using the formula 85% funds to serve qualified clients in that part of the County. The formula dollars support WtW services at our One-Stop centers in Daly City and Belmont. DOL WtW funds will provide necessary job retention and post-employment support services to CalWORKs participants as a last resort when CalWORKs funding is not available or has been exhausted. They will complement CalWORKs funding to facilitate seamless service delivery to those identified as being most at risk for on-going welfare dependency.

OICW was involved in all the design meetings for the WtW referral and service coordination procedures. We have a unit of CalWORKs Case Manager staff co-located in the OICW building, which facilitates referrals and communication with this WtW partner/subcontractor.

CWD coordinated with OICW regarding expenditures of the State WtW Grant Matching funds. The majority of the funds will be used to support specialized job coaching and job development for WtW clients. Meetings are still being held on ways to best expend the funds. In general, the funds will be used to promote the objectives of the WtW and FFP dollars.

The federal Department of Labor (DOL) Welfare to Work (WtW) program provides a rich array of services to eligible clients. DOL WtW is designed to serve those on aid for 30 months or who are within 12 months of their durational time limit, or who are otherwise at risk of being long term welfare recipients. It also serves noncustodial parents of minor children whose custodial parent fits these criteria.

DOL WtW clients can be identified by the case manager or through the assessment process at any point as the client moves through the system. The automated CDS system is also used to produce lists of potentially eligible clients based on time on aid.

Selected participants are assigned to a regional vocational counselor for completion of the eligibility and registration process, assessment, evaluation, and development of a DOL WtW plan. The DOL WtW plan is incorporated into the overall Work First plan. The vocational counselor coordinates vocational services, monitors plan progress, and coordinates the services of job developers and job coaches. If necessary, any sanction

would be applied by the CalWORKs Case Manager after conferring with the Vocational Counselor.

DOL WtW services include:

- \_ Job readiness including intensive job readiness counseling;
- \_ Job placement including skills assessment, identifying the range of locally available occupations, and job development;
- \_ Post-employment services, including basic educational skills training, occupational skills training, ESL, and job coaching; and
- \_ Job retention and support, including child care, transportation, Mental Health, and non-Medi-Cal substance abuse treatment necessary to obtain or keep a job.

## **E. Substance Abuse Treatment Services**

HSA administers the County Drug and Alcohol program. Alcohol and Drug Assessment Specialists are members of the FSST and provide specialized assessments and evaluation upon referral. The evaluation includes a determination of whether substance abuse treatment is needed, and whether the substance abuse problem poses a barrier to employment.

The FSST assigns a Primary Case Manager who may be the Drug and Alcohol specialist if substance abuse is the primary problem for the individual. The case manager arranges and monitors appropriate services including substance abuse treatment. Referrals can be made to vocational services if appropriate and if the substance abuse constitutes a barrier to obtaining regular employment. In addition, a training program has been implemented for HSA staff to help them recognize the signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug abuse, referral protocols, and addiction theory

Participants who need drug or alcohol treatment are referred to community-based substance abuse treatment providers who have existing contracts with the County. Outpatient providers include El Centro de Libertad, Free at Last, Outpatient Drug and Alcohol Services for Asians, Pyramid Alternatives, Service League of San Mateo County, Sitike Counseling Center, and Women's Recovery Association (WRA). For nonresidential treatment, the contractors provide two hours of alcohol and drug recovery services per week for a minimum of 12 weeks. HSA is working with these providers to facilitate obtaining drug Medi-Cal certification to maximize federal reimbursement.

HSA considers its Alcohol and Drug prevention and treatment services essential for both CalWORKs participants and other program clients in reaching its goal of ensuring that individuals become healthy, productive, and contributing members of the San Mateo County community. A comprehensive, interdisciplinary planning process undertaken by the Substance Abuse Network, with participation from a variety of

disciplines and agencies both public and private, culminated in the Strategic Plan for Alcohol and Drug Services for San Mateo County which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in September, 1998.

To meet the goals of this plan, the County allocated \$616,000 in increased County general funds to develop expanded treatment capacity. The County received an additional \$2,250,000 in State and federal grants. The County exceeded its first year goals for increasing capacity and reducing waiting time, and in response has revised the plan to achieve full implementation in five years rather than seven.

Four new positions were added to improve the infrastructure due to funding and workload increases, and contracts were developed to significantly expand treatment services for adolescents and adults. Two new positions were also funded through CalWORKs block grant funds.

Enhanced treatment services include a new group home for adolescent girls established by WRA, which also provides outpatient services; an increased focus on methamphetamine abuse; increased perinatal substance abuse services; and expansion of drug court. A new drug court has been established in the Northern region, and capacity has been added to serve Trial Track clients in a judicially-supervised, treatment-based model that is expected to reduce recidivism. In addition, the Latino Expansion Project has added residential care through the Latino Commission, and hired three additional counselors through El Centro de Libertad and Free At Last. Free at Last expansion services include new and expanded residential treatment programs for both men and women and additional outpatient treatment services.



## F. Mental Health Treatment Services

HSA has developed a Memorandum of Understanding with County Mental Health, and Mental Health has assigned a full-time staff liaison with CalWORKs to assess the needs of participants. As indicated in the matrix below, Individuals with Mental Health needs are referred to County Mental Health for appropriate treatment and follow-up.

County Mental Health provides licensed Mental Health professionals as members of the FSST and who can also serve as Primary Case Manager for participants with serious Mental Health issues. Mental Health staff are outstationed at regional offices.

Mental Health staff assigned to the FSST will have up to five working days to meet with a client who is referred to them for a Mental Health assessment. The assessment will be completed in one to two visits. In general, it is expected that clients will be referred to Work First concurrently with other services they need. The purposes of the assessment is to make recommendations about which of the following additional services are most appropriate:

Assessment outcome:	Referral outcome:
The client is work ready and can function in a job club environment	Refer to SUCCESS
The client may be appropriate for a supported employment environment	Refer to VRS for a vocational assessment, and County VRS Services.
The primary problem is substance abuse	Refer to Alcohol and Drug services. These participants may also attend Job Search components if the Substance Abuse permits work.
The client has Mental Health needs that are episodic in nature and could benefit from brief treatment and/or medication	Mental Health will provide services. Mental Health staff will confer with other agencies and the assigned IESS as needed to coordinate care. Participants with Mental Health issues may also be assigned to Job Search components or training/education if the Case Manager determines that it is appropriate.
The client has serious mental illness and should be considered for SSI	This client is not a Work First candidate. Mental Health will provide services and work with the client to complete an SSI application.

Mental Health is reimbursed through the CalWORKs funding designated for this purpose.

After their 18/24-month limit expires, Community Service participants with Mental Health problems may still receive services through the County's Mental Health

providers or vocational counseling through VRS if those services are required to do the Community Service assignment.

## **G. Child Care**

HSA directly administers Stage I of the CalWORKs child care program. HSA has been directly administering child care programs for over 25 years and is an Alternative Payment Program contractor with the California Department of Education, and previously provided child care services under the GAIN program.

A Child Care Specialist (CCS) is part of the SUCCESS team in each service center and gives a presentation about child care at each SUCCESS orientation. The presentation includes information on the variety of child care options, health and safety in child care and how the HSA child care program operates. Each participant is given a packet which includes a brochure explaining the child care program, a brochure from the local Resource and Referral Agency on choosing child care, and a Subsidy Directory which lists all subsidized child care programs in the County.

At the end of each orientation the CCS meets individually with all clients who need child care services to answer questions and assist them in setting up a child care plan. If the parent has a provider in mind the CCS contacts the provider to determine a start date, rates to be paid and the schedule of care. If the parent does not have a provider in mind they are immediately referred to the resource and referral program, the Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County (The Council). The parent is given sufficient time to locate and visit suitable child care programs prior to beginning the workshop. Parents who choose family members or friends as child care providers are assisted with the Trustline process.

The CCS works with the family to assure that their child care needs are met for the duration of their participation in the program. As parents move from the workshop to employment or training they will be served by the same CCS. Each CCS will also work directly with each child care provider. Provider bills will be sent directly to the CCS who will make timely payment each month.

Stage II child care funding is shared by two Alternative Payment Program agencies: the Council and PACE, Professional Association for Childhood Education. The Council or PACE accepts families into Stage II programs providing a seamless transfer from Stage I. Eligible families (those who are no longer receiving cash assistance and are also employed) are transitioned to Stage II immediately after CalWORKs discontinuance.

HSA does not operate a Stage III program. Its CCDBG Expansion Contract that is the basis for Stage III funding is administered by The Council. The Council and PACE will

operate Stage III child care as well as other subsidized programs for working poor families and will transition Stage II families into Stage III slots as they become available.

## **H. Transportation**

Transportation services include bus passes (funded by CalWORKs or JTPA as appropriate), car allowances for gas and operations, very limited funding for car repair, and employer shuttles on a case-by-case basis. Transportation loans can also be requested through the Family Loan Fund administered by the Family Services Agency.

HSA is working with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to assess the transportation-related needs of both CalWORKs participants and other low-income individuals. Identifying gaps in transportation services and developing a set of cost-effective and implementable transportation options that will meet the mobility needs of both CalWORKs participants and other low-income individuals. The study is expected to be completed by June 2000.

The project will involve research on the existing transportation services and transportation-related needs, facilitation of focus groups and interviews, identification of barriers to using existing services as well as service gaps, the development of a range of strategies to build upon the existing transportation system and increase and improve the number and types of options available to CalWORKs participants and other low-income individuals, planning sessions with key stakeholders to develop a set of prioritized recommendations for viable projects. The transportation needs of low-income workers traveling to job locations in neighboring counties such as San Francisco and Santa Clara will also be examined.

The goal of the planning project is to develop both short-term and long-term strategies to improve transportation options and increase the affordability and accessibility of existing services and programs for CalWORKs participants and other low-income workers. The project will also establish a formal link between employment and training services, economic development and workforce investment processes, child care planning processes, and public transit service planning processes.

They will facilitate the input of the needs of CalWORKs and other low-income workers and their children in the planning process and identify how existing resources can respond to their needs.

## **I. Community Service Plan**

The San Mateo County Community Service Plan offers community service activities as a last resort for CalWORKs SUCCESS clients who have been unable to find and keep unsubsidized employment. Community service activities will be assigned to those who

have reached their 18-24 month time limit on aid and offered to some clients as an option prior to the time limit in order to help them find unsubsidized employment before they reach their time limit

Community services activities will be offered through the County Vocational Rehabilitation Services/Workcenter (County VRS), a supported work environment with vocational counseling and other services available on site. The County VRS is a rehabilitation organization with a goal of benefiting the community and operates as part of the County's Human Services Agency. The County VRS has a good track record in placing individuals who have serious difficulties finding work. It has been providing supported employment services for over 30 years and currently serves State Department of Rehabilitation, County Mental Health and GA clients. The County VRS also provides work experience for non-custodial parents when ordered by Family Court. The County VRS services are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) to provide work services and supported employment placement and have received State and local recognition for its success in placing difficult to serve clients.

Providing community service activities through the County VRS offers the advantages of real work and related support services. The possibility of placing clients in other public or private non-profit work settings will also be explored. If the off-site community settings can provide appropriate work experience to transition the client to self-sufficiency, as well as supervision and record keeping, such a placement will be considered.

Clients are expected to perform Community Service for the required number of hours per month less any hours already spent in unsubsidized employment. If additional activities are required for, or relevant to, the specific community service activity in which the recipient is placed, they may be included to meet the 32 per hour requirement (or 35 hours for two-parent families). They will be identified as part of the Work First Plan.

Such activities might include ESL classes, drug and alcohol treatment, training, or Mental Health supportive services.

Once assigned to community service activities, these clients can continue until they have reached their 60-month lifetime limit. It is the intent of the community service program to provide a supported work environment and work-related support services in order to enable the client to enter unsubsidized employment as quickly as possible.

However, there will be some participants who experience multiple setbacks and struggle through more than one work assignment before being able to find and keep a job. There are even some who will never be able to find unsubsidized employment.

### **Target population**

The community service program focuses on both mandatory and optional populations of CalWORKs clients who have barriers to employment or who have experienced recurrent job losses. The typical client will be an unskilled single mother with two children and little experience in the workforce.

- *Mandatory: CalWORKs SUCCESS clients who have reached their 18-24 month limit and have not found unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet their hourly participation requirement.*

The County intends to intervene early enough in the aid cycle by providing support through intensive case management, treatment, education and training, and other services to minimize the number of clients who reach the time limits without having found unsubsidized employment. However, if an aid recipient is cooperating with the terms of the Work First Plan and has not found unsubsidized work at the end of the 18-24 month period allowed by law, and if the County certifies that there is no job available, then the client will be referred to Community Service.

- *Optional: CalWORKs clients who have enrolled in Work First and participated in STEPS classes and the Network Center and have been unable to find employment or SUCCESS clients who have found a job but been unable to keep it.*

These clients may be referred to the County VRS for additional work-related assessment. This situational assessment will take place at the County VRS and the results will be provided to the case manager.

Based on the results of the assessment, the client's Work First Plan may be revised to include Community Service activities. The intent is to intervene early with job-related support and experience, rather than wait 18 to 24 months. Individuals in this group may be experiencing employment-related barriers that can be addressed through the intensive work related support provided by the County VRS. These individuals will be referred to community service activities at the County VRS on a voluntary basis. The County VRS will prepare them to not only find a job, but keep it.

Under current economic conditions, many of those clients who are capable of working have found jobs already through Work First, or are expected to be able to successfully find work with the assistance of the STEPS classes and Network Centers. The individuals who cannot find jobs in this economy are the most difficult to place. They may have less visible barriers to finding or keeping employment, and it is anticipated that the array of supportive services available through the Workcenter may help them to attain self-sufficiency.

## **Work Activities**

Except for non-mandated participants who volunteer for Community Service, work activities will be provided through the County VRS, and supportive staff on-site or off-site. Community service participants are required to cooperate as a condition of aid when it is part of the mutually agreed upon Work First Plan. Standards of cooperation will be applied by the supervisor and defined in terms of the job requirements. The participant will need to report to work as scheduled and on time and complete the work to the best of his or her ability, working with others and responding to supervision. If the participant is not cooperating, the case manager will be contacted and sanctions will be initiated.

### *Food Services through the County VRS*

Food services work opportunities are provided on-site at the kitchen and cafeteria as well as off-site at the employee cafeteria at HSA, and through the "County Catering Connection" run by the County VRS. County VRS participants provide catering to a number of county departments as well as local non-profits and businesses.

### *Off-site jobs at the County VRS*

In addition to the County VRS, there are several off-site placements. BFI Recycling employs eight GA clients. "Enclaves" are available primarily for Mental Health clients and provide clerical, janitorial, and other job placements at San Mateo Hospital and other County and community locations. These are unsubsidized work positions and not part of the Community Services assignments.

The County is aware of the Federal Labor Standards Act requirement that we not have unpaid Community Service clients performing the same tasks as a County VRS employee who is being paid to do the same type of activity. Care will be taken to differentiate between paid employee positions and unpaid Community Service assignments.

## **Community Benefit and Compliance with Statutory Mandates**

The County VRS benefits the community by providing job training, placement and mentoring opportunities for clients who have barriers to employment. The County

subsidizes the County VRS in the amount of nearly \$1 million in the current fiscal year.

**– The County’s Community Service planning process is the result of a collaborative process, consistent with WIC 11322.9 (d).**

Section 11322.9 (d) requires that each County CalWORKs plan shall have a Community Service component, which shall be developed in collaboration with local private sector employers, local education agencies, county welfare departments, organized labor, recipients of aid under this chapter, and government and community-based organizations providing job training and economic development.

The Community Service Component of the County of San Mateo CalWORKs plan was developed in a collaborative fashion pursuant to the statute. During the extensive planning period for CalWORKs, San Mateo County regularly convened a large group of community entities, including all those mentioned in the statute, to discuss and design a Plan which fits the unique demographic and employment make up of our County.

The collaborative process used to design the Plan was certified by CDSS on May 7, 1998. In this process, the decision to utilize the County VRS for our Community Service component was the primary choice of the collaborative process. The decision was made with the same CDSS-certified public input process as the rest of the Plan. (See Section L. Public Input to the County Plan).

**– County VRS customers include a long list of government and other publicly funded organizations in addition to those from the private sector.**

An extensive list of the currently active County VRS customers is included in Attachment 1. In general, the publicly funded organizations are customers for the County VRS’s extensive food services operation while the private industry customers provide us with work and training opportunities in the packaging and assembly area.

**– San Mateo’s Community Service component of the County of San Mateo’s CalWORKs plan involves services performed in the public sector.**

WIC 11322.9 (b) (1) states that Community Service activities shall be performed in the public and private nonprofit sector.

Consistent with the above statute, the County VRS is a County government facility staffed entirely with County employees. County VRS jobs are predominantly performed at the County VRS site, not at private companies. The revenue generated is used solely to help support the self-sufficiency and rehabilitative programs at the County VRS.

The County VRS operation fits perfectly with the recently passed Work Investment Act which emphasizes so strongly the partnership factor between public and private entities. On-site at the County VRS is one of our PeninsulaWorks One-Stop centers, a fully integrated campus featuring numerous public and private partners and a full list of job related services. The County VRS is a valuable component of PeninsulaWorks.

CDSS is welcome to come and view our County VRS if it is felt that it would enhance their understanding of the operation.

**– The primary purpose of the County VRS relationship with private businesses is to create work opportunities.**

The County VRS is accredited through the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) which requires all like agencies, including the County VRS, to bid jobs based on direct/indirect expenses and follow fair competitive bidding practices. Bids are reviewed on the basis of the community's prevailing wage for the labor category required. Thus, the County VRS cannot credibly be seen as a source of cheap labor. To the contrary, while the County VRS strives to be competitive in the market, it has lost work opportunities because its price is higher than the price of its competitors. Accordingly, production services provided by the County VRS should not be construed as below market value. The requirement of a competitive bid process means that the County VRS cannot undercut unions, private companies, or anyone else who provides labor to private employers in the County of San Mateo.

In, fact some small and large employers view their contracts with County VRS as part of their strong commitment to the community. For example, United Airlines (UAL), the second largest employer in the County, contracts work opportunities with the County VRS. They are a leader in the President's National Welfare to Work partnership and also sat on the County's Private Industry Council (PIC) Board to further evidence their community commitment.

Aside from UAL, other customers such as Klutz children's books and Superflight frisbees have publicly acknowledged that they purchase production services from the County VRS in order to support the operation's mission to provide work opportunities to community residents with employment barriers.

**– The primary source of County VRS funding comes from government agencies.**

All the revenue from all the contracts the County VRS has with its public and private customers is less than one-third of the amount needed to run the operation. It should be noted that the County General Fund costs for the County VRS are nearly \$1,000,000 annually.



**San Mateo's Community Service program is distinguished from others in the State.**

Our Community Service program is a unique model designed specifically by the community to fit with the County's employment and demographic features. We are sandwiched between two far more populous and highly industrialized Counties (San Francisco and Santa Clara) and are fortunate to have one of the State's lowest rates of unemployment at 1.5%.

It makes sense that our Community Services component be located at a facility where a variety of work and training opportunities exist, where training is concentrated on skills in demand in the community, and where diversity is the rule, not the exception. The County ranks first in the State in reduction of the welfare rolls for good reason. The emphasis is on combining work opportunities with necessary training, and on quick delivery of services to address any employment barriers which families may have.

The County VRS has served the disabled population of the County since 1957. It is the only County-operated sheltered workshop in California which serves aid recipients, Mental Health and Family Services clients and the disabled population. The County VRS is also a legally approved provider of community services for the San Mateo County Sheriff's Furlough program. It is a National model as a County operated sheltered workshop provider of community job training opportunities to such a varied population.

**The community is the primary beneficiary of the County VRS projects.**

Disabled and non-disabled persons in the community have a unique opportunity to help and learn from each other at the County VRS. This is rare. Most similar organizations serve one primary disability whereas the County VRS serves people with a multitude of disabilities and employment barriers.

This diverse environment teaches its own lessons on a daily basis. CalWORKs participants may be inspired by the work effort and motivation they observe on the part of disabled participants. Conversely, CalWORKs clients have an opportunity to serve as models for the disabled workers. This mutually supportive environment has positive results for both groups and helps prepare both for the world of work. We see this diversity as a fundamental and substantial benefit to the community.

The County VRS provides a financial benefit to the community by contributing nearly \$1,000,000 in unmatched funds toward the training of the community's disabled citizens.

Non-disabled CalWORKs clients can and will help the overall productivity of the County VRS. In turn, this increases opportunities for the community to train more of its disabled citizens and prepare them for a life that is no longer dependent on public resources. The anticipated higher productivity level of CalWORKs participants may help maximize the services which can be provided to the community.

The quality of supervision at the County VRS is an added benefit to the community. Because the community has chosen to concentrate the Community Services component at a central location, there is the additional confidence that supervision will be close and provided by people with long and proven experience in dealing with clientele who have multiple barriers to employment.

San Mateo County has an unemployment rate of 1.5%. The County is experiencing a labor shortage. To help meet this general community need, the Community Service Program trains clients specifically for positions which are in demand in the community. Clients who participate in Community Service and get jobs become tax-payers and productive self-supporting members of the community.

– **A variety of work skills can be acquired at the County VRS.**

Participants have an exceptional opportunity at the County VRS to explore a variety of both hard and soft employment skills. The client who participates on private customer production for a week or two can expect to be moved around to other tasks as well and learn other work skills.

We recognize that clients who reach their 18/24-month time limit may lack motivation or direction in their employment path. A conventional Community Service assignment may force a client to choose, or have chosen for them, a single occupational area. The County VRS allows for flexible work assignments in:

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Food Service         | Shipping and Receiving |
| Clerical             | Forklift operation     |
| Recycling            | Truck/van driving      |
| Assembly & Packaging | Janitorial service     |

In addition to these specific job skills, participants are counseled and coached in the value of skills associated with work such as punctuality, principles of teamwork, problem solving, communication, work stamina and self-improvement.

The County VRS serves in excess of 1,500 persons a year. The CalWORKs portion of the overall group will be very small. Less than 30 of our CalWORKs participants are projected to be involved with Community Service at the County VRS this year.

**Support**

There are two levels of support available to community service plan participants.

### *Supportive services offered to all SUCCESS participants*

- Child care, transportation and ancillary payments will be provided through CalWORKs as for all other clients. Arrangement of child care will be facilitated by child care specialists located in the regional office where the case is assigned. Bus passes and limited additional transportation assistance will also be available.
- Referrals to the FSST are made when the participant needs additional assistance in resolving barriers to employment. The multi-disciplinary FSST meets regularly to coordinate case management and monitor the client's progress and needs.
- After the 18-24 month time limit, Mental Health support will continue to be available for community service participants who have been unable to secure work due to Mental Health issues. These individuals will continue to be involved with County Mental Health in order to assure ongoing access to appropriate Mental Health services and successful Community Service placements. In addition, vocational counselors are available on-site and specialize in working with the Mental Health population.

The following specialized services are available through the VRS/Workcenter and Vocational Counseling Unit to support successful Community Service Placements provided the activity is required for the Community Service recipient to perform his/her specific assignment.

- Mental Health treatment, substance abuse treatment, or domestic violence counseling can be assigned by professional vocational counseling staff or through the primary case manager and are Welfare to Work activities.
- **Vocational testing.** Vocational testing is a part of the vocational assessment process if needed. This can include aptitude tests (such as CAPS, Career Ability Placement Survey), interest tests (such as COPS, the Career Occupational Preference System Inventory), basic skills testing (such as CASAS, the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System), timed clerical skills and aptitude tests, typing tests, and a variety of assessment checklists.
- **Situational Assessment.** This is a comprehensive work evaluation process that utilizes real work as the focal point for assessment and vocational exploration.

- **Work Adjustment.** This is a transitional, time specific, systematic program that assists participants to better understand the meaning, value and demands of work, learn or re-establish skills, attitudes and work behavior, develop improved functional capacities, develop appropriate interpersonal skills, increase self-confidence, and identify special work characteristics needed to obtain a job.
- **Employment Preparation, Job Development, and Placement.** This is a package of individualized services that assists job ready clients to obtain and retain competitive employment in the community. Services include job readiness and motivational counseling, skills awareness and transferability, discussion of vocational objectives, recognizing work characteristics and personal traits for the right job match, application and interview skills, job placement, and using skills to keep the job.
- **On-site substance abuse educational workshops.** These workshops are provided twice weekly and are open to all County VRS clients.

## J. Working with Victims of Domestic Abuse

The intent of the County is that victims of domestic abuse participate in Work First activities to the full extent of their abilities. The goal is to assist these women in the removal of barriers preventing them from attaining self-sufficiency and enabling them to resolve the abuse issues within the family through counseling or to remove themselves from the abuser if that is their choice. Every possible effort is made to ensure their safety during the process.

The County will provide applicants the opportunity to disclose domestic abuse issues at the time of initial screening and assessment, during the comprehensive strength-based assessment, which may include a home visit, or through self-identification. In instances of domestic abuse the participant is immediately referred to the appropriate community-based organization to discuss options to resolve the abuse issues and to the Family Self Sufficiency Team (FSST) to ensure that a safety plan is in place for the victim and her children Good cause is evaluated regarding participation in Work First.

Referrals for legal assistance and crisis counseling are also made as appropriate. The case manager works with the FSST and the client to develop an action plan on a case by case basis.

Victims of domestic abuse may have good cause for not participating in welfare to work activities, and the County may waive program requirements to the degree allowable under regulations for domestic abuse if domestic abuse is a barrier to participating in work-related activities. The decisions to waive program requirements will be made on a case-by-case basis.

SUCCESS training includes a course on:

- Definition of Domestic Abuse
- Causes of the Problem
- What is Victimization?
- Who are the Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse?
- Intervention Strategies

The Domestic Abuse course is provided to all SUCCESS staff including FSST members, managers, supervisors, Screening and Assessment Specialists, Employment Services Specialists, Eligibility Technicians, Income Employment Services Specialists, Community Workers, Child Welfare Services, Child Care Technicians, and office support staff. It is also provided to Community Based Organization staff.

The training is provided under contract with the Center for Domestic Abuse Prevention. Basic domestic abuse training for all workers and specialized training for some workers helps the County to recognize and address domestic abuse issues.

## **K. Performance Outcomes to Meet Locally Established Objectives**

Local program outcome objectives include reduced caseload, increased percentage of Family Group (FG) and Unemployed parent (U) families participating in work related activities, increased hourly average wage, and reduced welfare costs over the long-term.

The County has met and exceeded its objectives in caseload declines. Caseloads were projected to decrease from 5,488 in 96-97 to 4,165 in 00-02. In fact, caseloads decreased to 2,027 by March 2000. The percentage of one-parent households participating in work related activities was expected to increase from 29% to 45% by 2002, and has already increased to more than 40%. The percentage of two-parent households in work related activities was projected to rise from 44% to 90%. The participation rate has exceeded 75%, and is still increasing.

The State and County are collaborating to fund an extensive program evaluation project to look at processes, outcomes for participants and their families, and costs and

benefits of the SUCCESS model. The SMART System is a key factor in evaluation of the SUCCESS model. The SMART System has been developed for San Mateo County under contract with EDS. It represents an enhancement of the current Welfare Case Data System (WCDS) to operate in compliance with TANF and CalWORKs. SMART will interface with the Gain Information System (GIS) and the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and will support client referral tracking, program participation, family case management, and outcome measurement.

The SMART System is applicable to other WCDS counties with minimal alterations. It will allow clients to be processed at multiple intake centers, receive immediate registration, screening and/or referrals and be effectively placed into a work first experience. It will provide for multi-program, integrated database functionality to meet CalWORKs reporting requirements and to provide outcome data for the purposes of program evaluation.

In July 1998, the WCDS Consortium, representing 17 counties, voted to bring the SMART application under joint maintenance. Each of the 17 counties has either implemented SMART or is in the process of assessing how the application can best be used in its environment.

In addition, San Mateo County is the lead county, together with Santa Clara and Santa Cruz, in a federally funded evaluation by the SPHERE Institute to follow-up CalWORKs clients over time.

## **L. Public Input to the County Plan**

HSA has worked closely with the community during the past several years to develop a comprehensive, client-centered human services delivery model that will help families achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. This has been an intensive and challenging task. The SUCCESS Advisory Committee, the SUCCESS Coordinating Committee, and 12 design teams worked together to design and made recommendations for the SUCCESS model. More than 500 individuals representing HSA, other county departments, elected officials, the private sector, and client customers were involved in this effort.

During the period of development of the SUCCESS model, both the federal and State governments passed welfare reform laws. The SUCCESS Advisory Group took these welfare reform laws into account as appropriate in the design of the SUCCESS model. The SUCCESS Coordinating Committee included membership from: county departments (Board of Supervisors, County Manager, Human Services, Health Services, Housing Authority, District Attorney Family Support, Employee and Public Services); industry (Private Industry Council- PIC, San Mateo County Economic Development Agency - SAMCEDA); community based organizations (Fair Oaks

Community Center, Samaritan House, Community Services Center, Pacifica Resource Center, Hunger and Homeless Coalition, Shelter Network); Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (Child Care Coordinating Council); foundations (Peninsula Community Foundation); labor (AFSCME), and advocacy groups (Legal Aid). Design groups focused on direct client services, jobs, training, education and economic development, single intake, child care, housing, supportive services, finance, public information, ACCESS, research and evaluation, service provider, and waivers and legislation.

The Advisory Committee was comprised of State representatives (Employment Development Department B EDD, State Department of Rehabilitation), County representatives (Board of Supervisors, Human Services, Health Services, Housing Authority, District Attorney Family Support), city representatives (Burlingame, East Palo Alto, Pacifica Police), industry and business (PIC, SAMCEDA), education and training providers (OICW, County Office of Education, San Mateo County Community College District, Redwood City School District), health sector (Kaiser Permanente, Mills Peninsula Hospital, Seton Medi-Cal Center, Health Plan of San Mateo), community based organizations (Fair Oaks Community Center, Samaritan House, Family Services Agency, Daly City Community Services Center, Homeless Action), labor (AFSCME, Central Labor Council), advocates (Advocates for Equal Justice), funders (United Way, Peninsula Community Foundation), consumer representatives, and related commissions and task forces (Child Advocacy Council, Human Needs Task Force, Housing Task Force, Commission on the Status of Women, Drug and Alcohol Task Force, and the Commission on Aging).

## **M. Families Transitioning Off Aid**

The County recognizes the challenges facing a CalWORKs client who is transitioning off of cash aid. Entry level jobs do not pay an adequate wage to live on in a high cost county, and it is crucial to help the client develop the skills for advancement. In addition, individuals who have not had recent experience in the workforce may need extra support to help keep the first job. A number of supports are available to families transitioning off of aid:

**Cash aid.** SUCCESS participants who are working or otherwise fully cooperating (including through community service activities) will be able to continue to receive cash assistance even after the 18-24 month period. It is anticipated that some working families with low wages will continue to be eligible for cash aid, and the SUCCESS program will work with these participants to improve their skills and wages.

**Non-cash assistance.** Individuals who transition off cash aid will be able to continue to receive other SUCCESS services to the extent that they are eligible for some funding. While some CalWORKs funds for families not on aid are restricted to those who left due to employment, other funds can be used more flexibly. Post-CalWORKs support services include child care assistance and Medi-Cal. In addition, HSA is developing procedures for extensive follow-up plans and retention support. SUCCESS clients who are eligible for funding will continue to be served by the FSST and can return for Network Center, job search and other services. The County will also provide needed Mental Health services to employed families who transition off aid due to the 60-month time limit for up to a year after CalWORKs ends as long as the services are not available from other sources and are needed to retain the employment..

**DOL Welfare-to-Work.** Long-term CalWORKs clients eligible for DOL WtW services can receive post-employment support services, including basic educational skills training, occupational skills training, ESL, and job coaching. They are also eligible for job retention and support services including child care, transportation, Mental Health, and non-Medi-Cal substance abuse treatment necessary to keep the job.

**ART.** The Advancement and Retention Team (ART) focuses on ensuring that CalWORKs clients transitioning into work have the most appropriate support and skill development in order to be competitive in the workforce. Courses are offered at One-Stop sites. ART provides training in soft skills such as communication, productivity, problem solving, customer service, stress management, teamwork, self-improvement, work culture, and advancement strategies.

In addition, computer basics including keyboarding and introduction to Windows are provided, as well as introductory Internet courses. In order to evaluate the success of these services, follow-up calls are made to participants on evenings and weekends.

On-site child care is provided.

**Family Loan Program.** Options are being explored to expand the Family Loan Program to serve those transitioning off of aid. This program provides short-term, low-interest loans to help low-income families keep their jobs or continue their education. Funded by private sources and administered by a community-based organization, this program provides assistance with car repair, rent, child care and other necessary costs.

**FSST Extraordinary Circumstances Fund.** HSA has established this fund to provide assistance to families who need special financial help to overcome a temporary barrier to self-sufficiency. The FSST Extraordinary Circumstances Fund provides payment for goods and services that cannot be funded from other sources such as the Family Loan Program. Payments are for one-time or non-recurring expenses that reflect circumstances that prevent the family from working effectively to meet the objectives of their case plans, including moving costs or car repair. Each of the regional FSSTs has been allocated funds for this purpose, and requests come from staff directly to the regional FSST.



## **N. Job Creation**

San Mateo County is characterized by a diversified economy and a low unemployment rate of 1.5%. Strong market sectors include construction, transportation, finance, real estate, electronic and biotechnology. There are approximately 290,000 jobs employing 200,000 county residents and another 90,000 who commute to San Mateo County from outside of the County. In addition, about 150,000 County residents commute out of the County to work. San Mateo County residents are also employed in the booming high-tech economy of Silicon Valley to the south, the finance and service (tourist and retail) economy of San Francisco, and the East Bay.

The current County economy has more jobs than there are people to fill them. Because of the strong current economy, the Work First model represented by the SUCCESS program focuses on job advancement, not job creation. Private/ public collaboration is used to best match applicants to existing jobs and assist them with career advancement opportunities through job search strategies and additional skills training.

The County has a Job Creation Investment Fund grant from the California Trade and Commerce Agency. The project is coordinated by the San Mateo County Economic Development Agency (SAMCEDA) through a Jobs Acton team of local employers to identify employer skill needs and occupational opportunities which match the characteristics of San Mateo CalWORKs recipients and to identify career ladder opportunities for these individuals.

## **O. Compliance with the Requirements of CalWORKs**

Participants who are not exempt from the work requirements or who do not have good cause for non-participation in the SUCCESS program are required to find work or otherwise participate in welfare to work activities according to the terms of their individualized Work First Plan. Non-exempt individuals will be offered the opportunity to volunteer to participate in Work First. Emergency assistance, including immediate need and homeless assistance, is not contingent on Welfare to Work cooperation. Clients are not mandated to sign a release form allowing the Agency to share confidential information at an FSST meeting. While client participation in the FSST is beneficial and encouraged, it is voluntary for CalWORKs participants.

Most SUCCESS clients, including Self-Initiated Program (SIP) clients, will participate 32 hours per week in some combination of work, training or other welfare to work activities. Two-parent households will participate a combined total of 35 hours per week with one parent participating in welfare to work activities 20 hours. However, if both parents are SIPS they will each need to participate 32 hours per week.

SIPs must be enrolled in an educational program prior to appraisal, which is voluntary for applicants and mandatory for recipients. There is no duration time limit on SIPs, but after 18/24 months, they must work in unsubsidized employment for the required 32/35 hours weekly or participate in Community Service.

### **Exemptions**

Individuals who fall into statutory and regulatory categories that are exempt from welfare to work activities are also exempt from Work First. These individuals are not subject to the limit of 18/24 consecutive months on aid, but some of the exempt individuals remain subject to the 60-month lifetime limit. Exempt categories include:

- \_ Pregnant or parenting teens under 19 (must be referred to Cal Learn);
- \_ Child under 16;
- \_ Child 16,17, or 18 in full-time high school, GED, or technical/vocational school that will not result in a college degree;
- \_ Parent or caretaker of a child under 6 months of age, or of a subsequent child under 12 weeks of age;
- \_ Individual age 60 or over;
- \_ Individual who is disabled more than 30 days, where a doctor verifies (written/verbal) that the disability significantly impairs participation in job or Work First activities;
- \_ Pregnant woman with a written verification from a doctor that she is unable to work or participate in Work First activities;
- \_ Individual needed in home to care for impaired household member if the care prevents work or Work First participation;
- \_ Non-parent caretaker relative of a ward or dependent of the court or a child that is at risk of placement, and the care precludes participation in work or Work First activities; or
- \_ Victim of domestic violence and the county decides that the situation temporarily represents good cause to preclude Work First participation (to be reviewed every 3 months).

### **Good cause**

Individuals who have good cause for non-participation, based on AB1542, are excused from participation in welfare to work activities under SUCCESS. These individuals are still subject to the 18/24-month and 60 month time limits except that the worker may waive the time limits for domestic abuse. In addition, the months that a SIP is interrupted for good cause will not count against the 18/24-month clock. Good cause categories include:

- \_ Assignment of job does not meet appropriate work/training criteria (age, sex, race, religion, disability, or national origin discrimination); work hours exceed those

- customary to occupation; conditions violate health or safety standards; or lack of Worker=s Compensation insurance);
- Lack of necessary support services;
- Victim of domestic abuse;
- Child care is not reasonably available or arrangements have broken down or been interrupted for a child 10 or under or any age for a special needs child , in foster care or on SSI (including special needs care; care should be provided legally and within a reasonable distance of home or work);
- Remoteness as demonstrated by more than a 2-hour round trip from home to the activity or more than a two mile walk (the time required to transport children to school or child care is not included);
- Already engaged in an approved employment/training plan;
- Acceptance of the job would violate the client=s terms of union membership; or
- Mental disability that substantially contributes to the failure to comply (under consultation with County Mental Health).

## **Sanctions**

No sanctions are imposed on exempt individuals or those with good cause.

Only the non-cooperating recipient, not the full family, is subject to Work First sanctions. A 16 or 17 year old who does not attend school may be sanctioned, although the parent remains eligible. The family grant of Custodial parents who do not cooperate with child support enforcement will be lowered by 25%, but there is no sanction when a relative fails to cooperate with child support.

Non-exempt recipients may have alcohol and drug treatment as part of the Work First Plan after AOD assessment for up to 6 months. The treatment plan can exceed 6 months if it is combined with other activities. Non-compliance with the treatment plan can lead to sanctions. If the recipient is out of compliance with other aspects of the Work First Plan aside from treatment, substance abuse must be considered as a possible cause of the non-compliance. If so, it is considered good cause. The AOD specialist will assess to determine whether this is the case.

Sanction Notices of Action (NOAs) allow 30 days before sanctions are imposed, including 20 days for conciliation efforts and 10 days for the negative action notice. Home visits and FSST meetings continue during the 30-day period. NOAs will meet the requirements of the law.

Sanctions are limited to those authorized under CalWORKs. The case manager makes monthly face to face visits with the sanctioned individual, and weekly contact if called for in individual circumstances.

## **Grievance Procedure**

If an individual or family cannot reach agreement on the Preliminary Action Plan or the Work First Plan the worker may request that the supervisor or manager review the plan. The manager or supervisor will meet with the client regarding revisions of the plan. For applicants, participation is voluntary. For recipients, participation is required.

If agreement is not reached for the Work First plan emanating from County Assessment results, a binding third party assessment is available. Non-exempt recipients who continue to refuse without good cause to participate in Work First will be deleted from the assistance unit until they cooperate.

The first sanction ends when the individual cooperates. The second sanction lasts a minimum of three months and is cured when the individual is in compliance with Work First. A third or subsequent sanction lasts at least six months and is cured when the individual is in compliance with Work First.

## **P. Interaction with American Indian Tribes**

This section is not applicable. There are no federally recognized American Indian tribes operating with independent tribal jurisdiction in San Mateo County.

## **Q. Other Plan Elements**

The County is not currently participating in any demonstration projects under the supervision of CDSS.